UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2041
12 December 1995

T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* Security Council extends UNAMIR for final period until 8 March 1996; adjusts mandate in light of efforts to restore peace and stability though return of Rwandan refugees; reduces force level to 1,200 troops.

* Secretary-General expresses thanks for release of two French pilots missing in Bosnia and Herzegovina; will participate in signing of Bosnian Peace Agreement in Paris on Thursday.

* General Assembly adopts seven resolutions dealing with United Nations humanitarian and disaster relief; adopts report of Preparatory Committee for fiftieth anniversary.

* Secretary-General recommends Security Council extend UNMOT mandate for six months; notes slow progress towards resolution of Tajik conflict and rising tension on ground.

* Afghanistan can attain peace and stability, but will need continued support of United Nations and international community, Secretary-General says.

* * *

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) for a final period until 8 March 1996. It also decided, in the light of current efforts to restore peace through the voluntary and safe repatriation of Rwandan refugees, to adjust the Mission's mandate. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 1029 (1995).

The Council mandated UNAMIR to: exercise its good offices to assist in achieving the voluntary and safe repatriation of refugees within the frame of reference of the recommendations of the Bujumbura Conference and the Cairo Summit of the Heads of State of the Great Lakes Region, and in promoting national reconciliation; and assist the Rwandan Government in facilitating the voluntary and safe return of refugees and, to that end, support the

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Government's efforts to promote a climate of confidence and trust through the performance of monitoring tasks.

The Mission will also: assist the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international agencies in the provision of logistical support for the repatriation of refugees; and contribute, with the agreement of the Rwandan Government, to the protection of the International Tribunal for Rwanda as an interim measure until alternative arrangements agreed with the Government can be put in place.

The Council requested the Secretary-General to reduce the Mission's force level to 1,200 troops, and to reduce the number of military observers, headquarters and other military support staff to 200. It also requested him to withdraw the Mission's Civilian Police component. The Council further requested him to initiate planning for the complete withdrawal of UNAMIR within six weeks after the expiry of its mandate.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today expressed thanks to all those who had contributed to the liberation of the two French pilots shot down over Bosnia and Herzegovina more than 100 days ago. He said the release of Captain Chiffot and Lieutenant Souvignet showed, once again, the indispensable virtues of diplomacy and dialogue.

The Secretary-General told correspondents in Geneva that he would participate in the signing of the Peace Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Paris on Thursday. He said the United Nations would contribute to the implementation of the Agreement in three ways: at the level of the international police force; at the humanitarian level, through the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees; and through collaboration with other organizations in the protection of human rights.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said he would then return to New York, where the Security Council would adopt a resolution on Eastern Slavonia. The operation there would be led directly by the United Nations. "We will take care of this region, which is to be returned, in conformity with the accord signed between the two parties, to the Government of Croatia," he added.

* * *

The General Assembly today adopted seven resolutions addressing United Nations humanitarian and disaster relief, including assistance to Liberia, Central America, El Salvador, Angola and Djibouti, as well as countries affected by the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The Assembly also adopted the report of its Preparatory Committee for the Organization's fiftieth anniversary, noting with deep appreciation the successful completion of its work.

(more)

By the resolutions adopted today, the Assembly referred further deliberations on the strengthening of the coordination of United Nations emergency humanitarian assistance to the 1996 session of the Economic and Social Council; requested the Secretary-General to undertake an assessment of needs in Liberia, with a view to holding a round-table conference of donors on the matter; requested the United Nations to mobilize resources for the new strategy for development of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America; and urged the Government of El Salvador and all political forces involved in the peace process to finish complying with the Peace Agreement and to continue to develop programmes to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people.

The Assembly also called on the Angolan parties to fully implement the Peace Accords in order to bring peace and stability to the country; requested the Secretary-General to increase the opportunity for countries affected by the implementation of the Security Council sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to participate actively in the post-conflict reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia; and declared its solidarity with Djibouti and requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the necessary resources for that country.

* * *

The Security Council should extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for six months, according to the Secretary-General. In a report dated 8 December, he said that progress towards resolving the conflict had been slow and that tension on the ground had risen. However, the protocol on the fundamental principles for establishing peace and national accord in Tajikistan signed by the parties in August would serve as an important framework for the ongoing negotiations on a comprehensive peace agreement.

The vast majority of internally displaced persons and refugees had been successfully resettled, Mr. Boutros-Ghali noted. However, delays continued to occur in the implementation of other important confidence-building measures agreed upon during the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks. He welcomed the support Security Council members had given to his proposal for the strengthening of UNMOT, and called on the Afghan authorities and the United Tajik Opposition to facilitate arrangements permitting the establishment of an additional liaison post at Taloqan.

The Secretary-General called on the Tajik parties to use the newly convened talks at Ashkhabad as a means of restoring peace and national accord in their country. The support of all concerned -- particularly of neighbouring and other observer States -- was needed for that important effort.

* * *

The Secretary-General has stated that Afghanistan is at a critical crossroads. In a report to the General Assembly dated 6 December, he said the country could either pursue peace through dialogue and negotiations in a spirit of give-and-take and with the assistance of the United Nations, or follow the route of continued war and confrontation where today's victor might be tomorrow's vanquished. Unfortunately, the current leaders of the principal factions seemed to favour the route of war and confrontation, notwithstanding the evident longing of their people for peace.

Nevertheless, the Secretary-General said that peace and stability in Afghanistan were attainable, and that the United Nations should not falter now. He stressed that the international community should not lose interest in the country, nor become accustomed to its plight.

* *** *